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The Bureau of Land Management Service Center Newsletter October 1992

CENTER SCENE

DESIGNING FOR ACCESS

Employees in the Branch of Building Engineering (SC-673) are very aware that all of us, in reality, are only "temporarily able-bodied." Chances are great that at some point in our lives, due to illness, temporary injury, or age, we will not be able to climb those stairs or open that door as we have been so accustomed to doing. This is the guiding force behind the concept of "Universal Design" whereby architectural barriers are removed, not for the benefit of just those in wheelchairs, but for all of us.

Integrating Universal Design features in all new and remodeled BLM facilities is a long-term goal of the Building Engineering Staff. They are devoted to and responsible for implementing the requirements of the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS), which includes reviewing those structures built with Bureau construction funds for compliance.

Branch employees have recently designed ramps and curb cuts to provide much needed access to Building 50 from Building 41 and the south parking lot. They are also reviewing contract drawings for the new BIFC Headquarters Building in Boise, this review includes a detailed evaluation for compliance with UFAS. In addition, they are involved with accessibility issues at the national level. Frank Ciesel, an architect for the Branch, serves on the Boards of both the National Center on Accessibility and the Bureau's National Accessibility Guide Team.

Through extensive training, the designers in the Branch ensure that they are up to date on the latest issues and techniques to provide increased access to Bureau facilities.

PERSONNEL NEWS

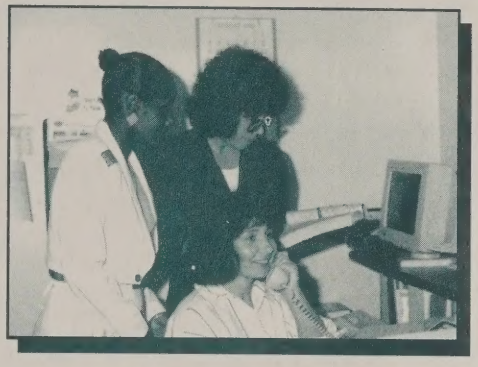
New Employees:

Leon Campbell, II, Printing Off., SC-657
Eva Fennell, Budg. Analyst, SC-614
Keven Hoffstutler, Proc. Clerk, SC-652
David Schafersman, Supv. Phys. Sci., SC-212
James Schloss, Eng. Specs. Writer, SC-673
Amy Seitz, Voucher Exam., SC-616
Shannon Shaffer, Voucher Exam., SC-616
Thomas Spencer, Land Surv., SC-614
Karen Wrenn, Mgmt. Analyst, SC-657

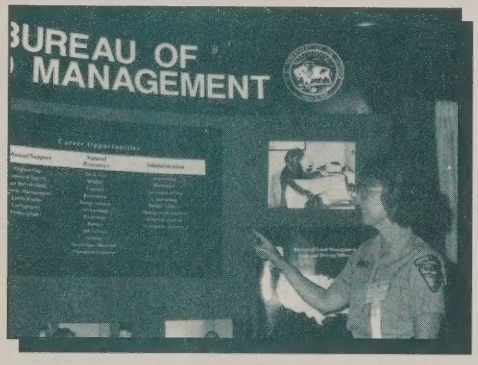
Separations:

Paul Christensen, Cartographer, SC-671
Mark Feller, Comp. Sys. Analyst, SC-329
Stephanie Fenton, Library Aid, SC-653
Susan Lindgren, Secretary, SC-342
Charles Tulloss, Tech. Serv. Prgm. Mgr., SC-670
Cynthia Wiese, Voucher Exam., SC-616

BIG CONFERENCE



Ethylene Crenshaw, SC-342C, (left) and Linda Mozell, SC-615, work with Theresa Fresquez (seated), then detailed to SC-120, to make their reservations for the Blacks In Government (BIG) Conference in Washington, DC.



Mary Barger of the Bureau Recruitment Staff explains BLM career opportunities at the Conference.

From left to right, Faye Bogan, SC-675, Ken Washington of the Colorado State Office, and Lee Allen of the Bureau Recruitment Staff listen as Sherman Gillespie of BLM's Washington Office explains graphics production.

FIRE ON THE MOUNTAIN

by Karen Miranda

In mid-August, I received a call from a dispatcher at the Rocky Mountain Fire Coordination Center in Broomfield. Wildfire activity in the West was picking up, and I was being assigned on standby to the Rocky Mountain Incident Team as an Information Officer trainee. Over the past 2 years, I had taken various courses, including Basic Incident Command System (I-220) and Information Officer (I-403) training. Now, I was on the brink of going to an actual incident.

Being on standby meant I had to stay near a phone and within 2 hours of Broomfield, and I had to be packed and ready to go when called. The call came at work on August 20. The Team, which included Forest Service, BLM, Park Service, and State agency personnel from Colorado, Wyoming, and South Dakota, was being flown to Missoula, Montana. From there, we expected to be sent to the Newland Fire (every fire is given a name, just like a hurricane) in the Salmon National Forest in Idaho.

Once we arrived in Missoula, however, we were diverted. The next day, we flew by air cargo plane to the Foothills Fire in the BLM Boise District and the Boise National Forest in Idaho. Coming into Boise at night, we could see the fire line, stretching almost 10 miles across the top of a ridge in very mountainous terrain, from the air. The flames were unusually high, some 200-300 feet. We were in for a big fire, which would eventually burn almost 260,000 acres.

Mike Rieser of the Craig District Office maintained radio contact with helicopters to guide them to their drops.

Early the next morning, we were bused from Boise to Prairie, Idaho, a small ranching community near the fire. The local sheriff had tried to evacuate the community, but residents refused to go, choosing instead to stay and help protect their homes and livelihood. Local knowledge of the area proved to be valuable during the 2-week firefighting effort.

We arrived at our Incident Base, which was an empty field with a nearby air strip. During the next few days, the field grew into a small city of sorts. We had tents, space heaters, generators, a kitchen, portajohns, showers, cellular phones, and even laundry facilities and a small commissary operated out of the back of a truck.

At one point during the fire, the camp supported 1,200 firefighters and overhead personnel. Crews arrived from all over the United States. Many of the crews were Native American and Hispanic, some of whom spoke little English. One Apache crew from New Mexico was all female, which is still unusual in the fire program, although most crews include some women.

Working a fire assignment gave me a chance to get to know BLMers from field offices. Many of the key positions on the team were filled by BLM employees, including the Deputy Incident Commander.

Helicopters dipped buckets into containers of retardant (a sulphur and phosphate powder mixed with water) at the Foothills Fire helibase, then headed for the fire to make their drops. Air operations were instrumental in fighting this particular fire, due to the rugged terrain and difficult access.

Some members of BLM's Western Slope Helitack in Grand Junction staffed the helibase. In addition, the experience gave me an opportunity to learn about the fire program and to see people from a variety of agencies working together very smoothly. Everyone did their jobs as assigned, with little awareness of each other's agency status or positions. Team members and firefighters focused on what mattered — putting out the fire while protecting lives and property.

After 2 weeks on the fire, I was "demobed" home September 2, with a new understanding of this important interagency program. If you are interested in volunteering for fire duty, contact the Service Center Training Officer, William Moody, at 236-6699.

CFC EVENTS PLANNED

Two major Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) events are on the agenda for October. The Denver Federal Center CFC Fair will be held between Buildings 56 and 67 on October 7 from 9:30 to 1:00. Over 50 agencies will have booths set up and people available to answer questions about where your money goes, how to volunteer, and other ways to help out. The fair is always interesting and provides an excellent opportunity to learn about how CFC agencies serve our community.

The ever-popular CFC Bakery/Dessert Contest and Auction will be held on October 27. All are welcome to donate items and to bid at the auction. Donations can include handicraft items, services (piano lessons, a guided fishing trip, an airplane ride, etc.), food (a jar of family-recipe spaghetti sauce or salsa, homemade bread, or a dessert delivered once a month for a year), or whatever else you can think of.

Auction items should be coordinated with Barb Guest (SC-672) as soon as possible. Ray Boyd (SC-213) will once again be the main auctioneer, with frequent appearances by guest celebrities.